

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A video-signal recording and playback apparatus for recording and playing back a video signal of a television-broadcast program, said video-signal recording and playback apparatus comprising:

a recording mechanism configured to record ~~means for recording~~ a video signal onto an information-recording medium;

an extraction mechanism configured to extract ~~extracting means for extracting~~ a representative picture from a video signal to be recorded;

an attachment mechanism configured to associate ~~attaching means for attaching~~ an evaluation value to [[a]] the representative picture extracted by said extraction mechanism, said evaluation value being indicative of a degree of likeness of the representative picture to other representative pictures ~~extracting means~~;

a preservation mechanism configured to preserve ~~preserving means for preserving~~ a representative picture extracted by said extracting means in said information-recording medium; and

a thinning means for carrying out a thinning process on ~~mechanism configured to reduce~~ a number of representative pictures preserved by said preserving means ~~preservation mechanism~~ in said information-recording medium based on the basis of said evaluation value ~~attached by said attaching means~~.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): A video-signal recording and playback apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said extracting means ~~extraction mechanism~~, said attaching means ~~attachment mechanism~~, said preserving means ~~a preservation mechanism~~ and said thinning means ~~mechanism~~ are capable of carrying out their respective pieces of processing

concurrently with processing carried out by said recording means to record a video signal onto said information-recording medium.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): A video-signal recording and playback apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said attaching means attachment mechanism is capable of attaching [[an]] the evaluation value to [[a]] the representative picture by reducing other evaluation values of representative pictures adjacent on the time axis.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A video-signal recording and playback apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said attaching means attachment mechanism is capable of attaching evaluation values to representative pictures in such a way that said evaluation values are dispersed along said time axis.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A video-signal recording and playback apparatus according to claim 1 wherein said thinning means mechanism is capable of carrying out a thinning process on representative pictures recorded by said preserving means preservation mechanism on said information-recording medium on the basis of resemblance of said representative pictures.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A video-signal recording and playback method adopted in a video-signal recording and playback apparatus for recording and playing back a video signal of a television-broadcast program, said video-signal recording and playback method comprising:

a recording step of recording a video signal onto an information-recording medium;

an extracting step of extracting a representative picture from said video signal to be recorded;

an attaching step of attaching an evaluation value to said representative picture extracted at said extracting step, said evaluation value being indicative of a degree of likeness of the representative picture to other representative pictures;

a preserving step of preserving said representative picture extracted at said extracting step in said information-recording medium; and

a thinning step of carrying out a thinning process on a number of representative pictures preserved at said preserving step in said information-recording medium on the basis of said evaluation value attached by said attaching means.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): A recording medium for storing a program to be executed by a video-signal recording and playback apparatus for recording and playing back a video signal of a television-broadcast program, wherein said program is a computer readable program, said execution of instructions of program comprises implement a method comprising:

a recording step of recording a video signal onto an information-recording medium; an extracting step of extracting a representative picture from said video signal to be recorded;

an attaching step of attaching an evaluation value to said representative picture extracted at said extracting step, said evaluation value being indicative of a degree of likeness of the representative picture to other representative pictures;

a preserving step of preserving said representative picture extracted at said extracting step in said information-recording medium; and

a thinning step of carrying out a thinning process on a number of representative pictures preserved at said preserving step in said information-recording medium on the basis of said evaluation value attached by said attaching means.